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747 The poverty of the country prevents the development of
794 organized private effort to assist the needy. The only such efforts--albeit sporadical--are those of the churches, which have always been centers of social assistance as well as of spiritual life. The impoverishment of the churches after World War II caused most of these projects to disappear so that today church welfare activities are restricted to the community, and local parish priests have meager funds, but funds which are continuously being given to assist those of the parish who are in need.

745 In Hungary public effort to assist the needy was always considerable. The pre-war social security system of Hungary was one of the first in Europe, and it served as a model for many other countries. The Communists have extended the coverage to large masses, but under their rule the economic status of the country worsened and the actual social security benefits depreciated along with incomes so that they do not represent any real defence for the individual against financial disaster.

The number of persons covered by the social security system, presently being administered by the Trade Union Federation, is almost 6 million, approximately 60 per cent of the entire population. The most important benefits are: paid vacations; the coverage of medical

745

expenses and pharmaceuticals for both the insuree and the members of his family; and sick pay, which is about half the regular salary. Women receive maternity pay during the last six weeks of their pregnancy and receive a slight nursing benefit. Labor accidents are also covered; persons injured or disabled in industrial accidents receive 66 per cent of their regular income, and widows of the accident victims receive a 20 per cent life annuity. Wage earners with children under 18 receive a child bounty (18 forints in 1947). Agricultural workers enjoy the same benefits, provided they do not own more than 5 cadastral yokes of land.

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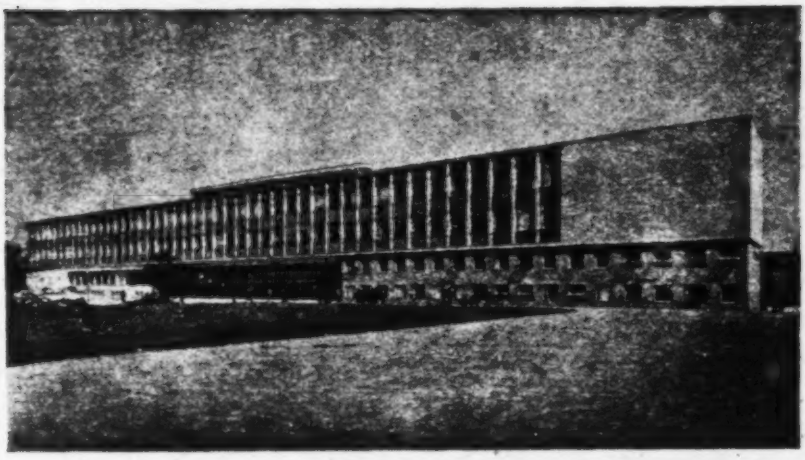
CONDITIONS OF LABOUR. Wages in Hungary are low compared to English standards, but higher than in Rumania or the Balkans. They are especially low for unskilled and female labour, whereas the skilled craftsmen, of whom there is a shortage, can command a fair price for their work. Collective bargaining exists, and wages are fixed for trades, varying between Budapest and the provinces. The cheapness of food and the fact that few workers have to live far from their place of work partly offsets the small money wage. In recent years a good deal has been done to improve general working conditions. The biggest gap is the absence of any system of unemployment assurance, or even of any organized relief. In other respects, however, social legislation in Hungary, for the industrial worker, compares not unfavourably with that of most countries at a similar stage of economic development. Since the last war a very modern system of sickness assurance was introduced. Shortly before the present war, old age, invalidity and dependents' assurance, Sunday rest and holidays with pay were introduced, and, after hours of work had come down rapidly by trades, the 8-hour day and 48-hour week were introduced in principle. When war broke out, the Government took powers to suspend all protective legislation, but did not use its powers widely, beyond introducing compulsory direction of labour in agriculture and in factories working on war production. A great deal of overtime was worked in some factories, but the legalized overtime rates were paid. Sunday rest and holidays with pay remained in force. The whole wage and price level was taken

workers. In the Five Year Plan the country needs 650,000 new workers for the realization of the tasks before it, and part of this tremendous number of workers is being trained by Ferenc Gergely and his fellow workers with affection and patience and the ambition to turn out skilled workers worthy of their masters.

Among Ferenc Gergely's apprentices the most skillful is Mrs. Istvan Kincses. She is a diligent and ingenious young woman who came to the capital from the country. For a while she busied herself at home, in her little household, but when she saw that all careers are open to women as well as to men and that no differences are made between men and women as far as work and wages are concerned —she decided to become a skilled worker. She has been working with Ferenc Gergely for almost a year, and four times a week she attends evening classes of the Secondary School for Working People. This new type of school was instituted by the People's Democracy for those who in the past had no opportunity to study and now want to make up for lost time without, however, giving up their work.

Mrs. Kincses will soon be a skilled worker or even a stakhanovite, clever and ambitious as she is. Or a technician or even an engineer if she wins her matriculation certificate at the Workers' School and decides to continue with her studies. Her future is in her own hands. Women are no longer inferior, badly paid workers in Hungary, a kind of "ersatz-manpower," as they used to be in the past. She has the same rights and the same opportunities her male fellow workers have. There are tens of thousands of working women in every branch of industry, in every factory and plant, in transportation, in the offices and in public administration, in the fields of education, arts and sciences, who do their jobs and are paid the same as the men.

The people's state takes particular care of its working women. As provided by law, they are entitled to three months maternity leave with full pay, or, should their



The apprentice home at the Matyas Rakosi works in Csepel.

condition require it, to more. If she places her child in the factory baby care center, the young mother has the right to go down there and nurse it. This time is included in her eight work hours. Pregnant women may ask to be transferred to lighter work without reduction in wages. Six months before and six months after her delivery a woman cannot be discharged from her work or job. Working women are protected by law from having to do night-work or exhausting overtime.

Around four o'clock, when he has finished with the apprentices, Ferenc Gergely leaves the workshop. He goes to the locker room, takes a hot shower and changes into his street clothes. Then he goes to the factory library to return a book. He loves to read, but in the past he had little opportunity to indulge in this pastime. Either he had no time or he had no money. Now he has both although reading costs him nothing since the library provides him with books free of charge. He can read, study, educate himself at his pleasure without having to pay for it. There are approximately twenty-five hundred

They sit and talk as old friends would. They recall that in the past the state paid little attention to the health of the workers. Half of the burden of social security was paid by the workers, but, whenever they wanted to take advantage of the social security services, the authorities always found a way to deprive them of their rightful claims.

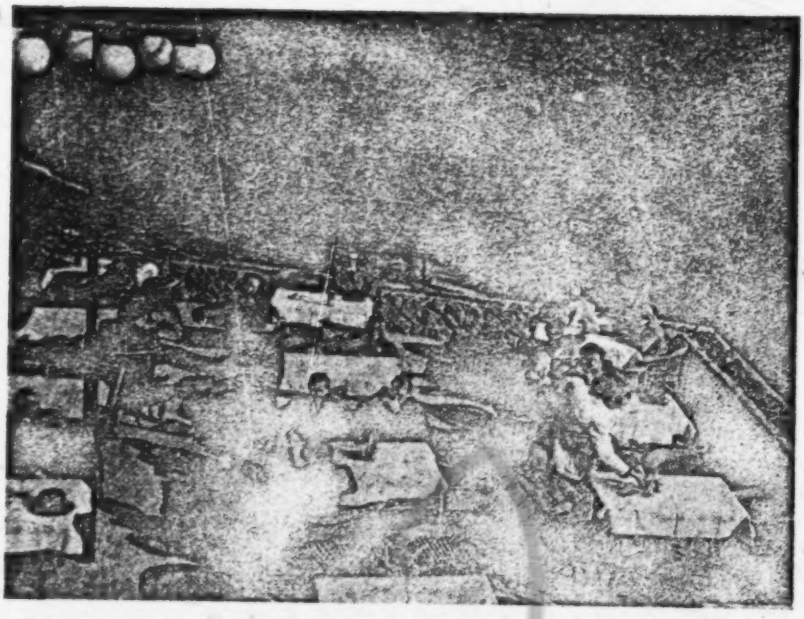
In new Hungary everything is changed. Since the trade unions, that is, the workers themselves, direct the work of the social security organization, a number of new, modern hospitals and clinics have been established. Health care has improved, sick benefits increased, the number of accidents lessened; and health statistics show an increasingly

Lounging in the garden of the resort hotel.

encouraging picture. The entire burden of social security is borne by the employer, that is, in most cases by the state. The network of mother and child care institutions is constantly being extended; the number of factory baby care centers and day nurseries increases day by day. As compared to 1938, infant mortality has decreased by one third.

A social security council, composed of workers, functions in every factory. This council sees to it that sanitary precautions are observed and takes care of the sanitary problems of the factory.

The trade unions handle the questions of rest and recreation and help the workers make the best use of their paid



Terrace restaurant of the hotel on Mount Liberty where Ferenc Gergely spent his vacation.

which was paid by the State for the erection, reconstruction and equipment of the buildings of the Reformed Church between August 1, 1946, and July 31, 1948. This real subsidy will also be reduced according to the above scale after every five-year period, and will cease entirely on December 31, 1968.

(d) Any other State subsidies which have been paid heretofore, will be paid according to the above rules on a decreasing scale.

(e) The State will take over the payment of sums paid out for pensions of members of the National Reformed Pastors' Pensions Institute, as well as those assisting the widows and orphans of these members, on the basis of the scale of civil servants' pensions and will also pay the pensions of those who are retired up till December 31, 1953.

6. Following the plain command of scripture the Hungarian Reformed Church in her Order of Worship will provide for intercessions for the Hungarian Republic, for the Head of the State, for the Government, and for the welfare and peace of the entire Hungarian people, as well as for Divine Service on State holidays, in conformity with the Word of God and the Confessions of the Church. She states that the new Hymnary which is about to be published, contains hymns appropriate to these occasions.

7. The Hungarian Reformed Church takes cognisance of the decision of the Government of the Hungarian Republic to nationalise, by legislation, non-State schools and such residential establishments as are organically connected with them.*

The action of nationalising the Reformed Church Schools will be governed by the following agreement :

(a) The Government will take into State service, as from July 1, 1948, all teaching and other personnel of nationalised schools and attached institutions, duly taking into account their length of service.

(b) The titles to the buildings of nationalised schools and attached institutions, as well as to the glebes assigned to the teachers, will be transferred to the State, together with all liabilities incurred before May 15, 1948, as entered in the land register or otherwise proved. Should disputes arise in connection with claims after considering the proposals of the Joint Commission constituted according to Para. 1, the final decision will rest with the Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education.

(c) The Government agrees to the arrangement whereby those members of the teaching staff who are serving as Church precentors may continue this work on the existing terms, for two years after the date of this Agreement. That part

* Dormitories.

185 When we give a short account of the record of Hungarian social policy, it must be pointed out that the same consistent social spirit prompted the passing of new laws, reforms and other regulations, and the establishment of new institutions. It was through no fault of the Government that the development was not continuous, and temporary interruptions impeded its progress. These were caused by the above-mentioned political and social events. In the beginning, when the Hungarian state had to be reorganized out of almost nothing, the execution of the Government's plans was hindered by poverty, stagnation [425] of production and by inflation. In spite of all these obstacles the Government put through the Land Reform Bill of 1920. After consolidating the affairs of the state, the second 185 stage of social progress arrived, which lasted until 1931. 178 During this period the rate of progress was significant. This stage was marked by rapid economic growth and industrialization. Hungary was then able to eliminate most of the differences which existed between her social legislation and that of the more advanced European nations. [648] The third stage of development could be entered upon only after the second international control of our finances came to an end in 1938. This stage was one of innovations.

185 It was a salient feature of Hungarian social policy 433 that it was always co-ordinated with the actual productive 745 capacity of the country. Laws which could not be carried out were never enacted. The social policy of the state avoided bringing the country to the brink of bankruptcy, as for instance was the case in Czecho-Slovakia, where there was no harmony between the social and economic programme of the country. At the time of that Republic's dissolution, the consequence of this lack of harmony was

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the virtual collapse of its indisputably advanced social institutions, especially its social insurance system. The laws enacted in Hungary had a sound economic basis.

In introducing this subject it was deemed opportune to stress these points because hostile propaganda systematically endeavours to convince public opinion in other countries that Hungary is a backward, feudalistic state, led by anti-social elements. Our answer to these charges is the simple recording of facts.

Regarding the social achievements of the pre-war years, we would only refer now to the fact that in the early days of industrial capitalism, Hungary was the fifth among the European nations to regulate child labour, as far back as 1840. She not only anticipated most of the other countries in this respect, but she secured wider protection for her child workers than even England did. It was a distinctive feature of pre-war social legislation that the system of compulsory sick-benefit insurance for workmen was established in Hungary in 1891, not many years after similar legislation in Germany and in Austria. At the time of the well-known Bismarckian social policy, important legislation along the same lines was instituted in Hungary as well.

Hungary, which was designated as a backward and anti-social nation, was the fourth country in Europe to inaugurate institutional family allowances. Hungary, stigmatized as a feudalistic state, distributed more than one million acres of arable land to her small farmers through land reforms after the war. Up to 1942 almost two million acres had been allocated for this purpose. At the time of the first land reform bill 260,000 families received lots for building homes. A second bill, recently instituted, will set

aside an equal amount of land for distribution among those whose security is desirable not so much for economic but rather for social and national reasons.

Post-war Hungary took the lead in Europe in regulating night work and woman and child labour, anticipating in some instances the recommendations of the International Labour Office at Geneva. The system of minimum wages, paid holidays and the restriction of working hours was established at an early date. This system not only covered the regulation of wages in industry, in which it is in force almost 100 per cent, but in agriculture as well, though in the latter it will be necessary to surmount considerable difficulties. The crowning achievement of Hungarian social progress was the new family protection policy, which is administered by a separate institution. Through its state-wide organization it has helped tens of thousands of large families in the country to own their own homes, and raised the living standard of the agrarian population by giving not only economic help, but moral support and vocational guidance as well.

The second world war — in which Hungary participates — necessitated the curtailment of certain social services, as was the case in many other countries. For instance, the regulations governing the limitation of the working week were suspended. Further, for the duration it was made possible for employers to compensate their workers for paid holidays. On the whole, it has not only been possible to maintain the pre-war social standards but to raise them as well. In the 1943 budget 250 million pengős are earmarked for expenditures of a social nature. This amount equals one fourth of the average peace-time budget. The trend of social policy as practised in Hungary and in most other

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countries reveals a marked difference in one respect. The
745 Hungarian social policy did not embrace the system of unemployment relief, as this was considered to lower the morale of the working class, and furthermore, Hungary was never in the position financially to spend millions on this type of relief. The Government endeavoured to find employment for the needy rather than hand out money to the unemployed. This policy was justified by results shown in the growth of industrial and agricultural production, and
185 of export trade. The Government is continuing along these
433 lines by promoting the industrialization of the country,
659 by decentralizing industrial concerns, especially new ones, and by trying to improve the quality and the quantity of agricultural production through subsidies amounting to 1000 million pengős during the past year and a half.

Special emergency measures of a temporary nature are passed to meet each contingency. Such are the war-time
722 regulations which promote the interests of the enlisted men
654 and of national defence by effective measures, and increased governmental support. Assistance for agriculture at the expense of the other branches of production at the time of the last economic depression was a similar measure, proving its value in reducing the burdens of insolvent farmers through the enactment of various laws. Taking everything into consideration, the general economic policy has not been formulated adventitiously to meet urgent needs and emergencies, but has consciously and consistently striven to carry out social ideals.

The following chapters will serve to give a brief
000 summary of the results achieved by social-minded Hungary during the past two decades, sometimes under most adverse conditions.

II. GENERAL SOCIAL POLICY.

Problems of the Civil Service.

The most pressing problem to be met during the critical situation brought about by the Treaty of Trianon was that dealing with the distressing plight of the educated classes. Countless obstacles hindered the employment of educated youths. Since the country had to be reorganized after the first world war and the ensuing communist revolution, the problems of the civil servants occupied a prominent position and had to be dealt with regardless of the almost insurmountable difficulties.

Since 1918 the salaries of the civil servants have been raised several times when compatible with the national budget. Social considerations played a prominent part in this respect in so far as the ratio of increases in the lower brackets was higher than in the upper ones. Again, when conditions necessitated salary cuts, those in the lower brackets were given similar proportionate consideration. It is worthy of note that the interests of family protection were always given foremost consideration, and the adjustment of family allowances was always on a progressive basis.

This policy has the following result; while a civil servant in the fifth grade receives not quite 70% of his 1918 salary, those in the eleventh grade receive 110%, and some messengers 140%. The family allowance of a civil servant in the eleventh grade was 10% of his salary for his wife and each child. Now he receives allowances on the following scale: 30% of his salary for his wife, 30% for his first child, 30% for his second, 35% for his third, 42% for his fourth, and 50% for his fifth child.

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'OTBA.'

Until 1921 no provision was made for sick benefit for civil servants. The Government, by Act XLVI of 1921, established the National Civil Servants Sick-benefit Foundation (Országos Tisztviselői Betegsegélyző Alap) which provides financial assistance for medical treatment to the civil servants, pensioners and their families. The Foundation was reorganized and extended by the Government in 1934. To-day the members of the Foundation are organized in 2000 districts and they receive medical attention at their homes in 3400 places. In the current year the various benefits will be greatly increased.

Pensions.

As regards pensions given to civil servants, great social progress was made in Hungary during the past two decades. Out of the funds of contributory pensions health resorts were opened at Hévízfürdő, Balatonföldvár, Galyatető and Balatonalmádi. In the near future this fund will finance the building of the most modern hospital in Hungary, the Horthy Miklós Sanatorium in Budapest.

The scope of the Pensions Act showed a very progressive spirit even in pre-war days. Since the war the pensions act was enlarged to the extent of providing rent allowances to the widows of pensioners. Similarly, the act was extended to include childrens' allowances to the pensioners. The benefits are graduated according to the number of children. A further advance was made in 1927. Since that year, civil servants who are bound to the state only by contract are provided for in their old age, or if they are disabled.

871 lish and maintain elementary schools in rural districts. The importance of this was felt most strongly in the Hungarian Prairies where the population is widely scattered in small communities. From these remote districts it was almost impossible for the children to reach the schools, particularly in winter. To help solve this problem residential institutions were opened where the children — mostly of tenant farmers — from scattered farms received board and tuition up to the 8th grade.

875 793 Lastly, very important steps have been taken to adjust the incomes of the teachers and the clergy and to promote their social welfare.

Social Security Insurance.

945 466 The Hungarian social insurance system is not of recent origin, although its all-embracing reforms and measures have been adopted in the last twenty years. The most remarkable social achievement in Hungary since the war was the enactment of Act XXI in 1927, instituting compulsory sickness and accident insurance. Of far-reaching importance also is Act XL of 1928, which provided for the creation of compulsory insurance covering retirement pensions, disability, and widows' and guardians' benefits. Later the statistical data concerning the persons insured under these acts will be given. To illustrate the historical [467] background it is sufficient to mention that the miners formed friendly benefit societies as far back as the fifteenth century. In the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century several similar societies were established, which in some branches of production — especially industry and mining — provided some sort of social insurance for their members. In 1891 sickness insurance was made com-

pulsory by law, and at the turn of the century the sick benefit societies were centralized. The retirement pension system of the miners was regulated by law in 1925. The above-mentioned Acts of 1927 and 1928 were followed by another (Act IV 1932), which regulates the administration of justice in cases arising out of disputes under these Acts.

The existing Hungarian social insurance organizations — especially their compulsory sick benefit insurance branch — give services which equal, and in several respects surpass, the general level of those in other European nations.

OTI.

Our largest social security institution is the National Social Insurance Institute, (Országos Társadalombiztosító Intézet) which had the following membership in 1940:

Sickness insurance	1,065,898	members
Old Age pensions	766,562	„
Accident insurance	1,143,572	„
Retirement pensions for miners	60,801	„

Over 2500 doctors were connected with the OTI in 1940. The yearly income of the institute is approximately 130 million pengős, and its different insurance funds approach 300 million pengős. It has 52 district pay offices, 15 branch offices, and 18 industrial pay offices. It gives permanent employment to almost 4000 people, and nearly 2000 are employed part-time. The Institute has full autonomy.

MABI.

The social welfare of the business employees is taken care of by the Insurance Board of Business Employees

• 745 (Magánalkalmazottak Biztosító Intézete). In 1940 there were 76,452 persons insured with the MABI for sickness, and 130,000 for old age pensions. Its yearly income and budget is in the neighbourhood of 20 million pengős, its retirement pension fund reaches almost 110 million pengős.

Insurance Boards of important Institutions.

Separate social insurance boards look after the employees of the railways. There are seven such boards with a membership of nearly 200,000. The seven boards operate with a yearly budget of 14 million pengős.

The social welfare of the shipping business employees was under the guidance of a society from 1896 until 1924 when a newly formed organization took it over. It had 12,000 members in 1940 and its budget amounted to one and a half million pengős.

The sick benefit society of the employees of the Royal Hungarian Tobacco Monopoly takes care of its 13,000 members.

The sick benefit insurance board of the Royal Hungarian Postal Savings Bank attends to the social welfare of its 2200 members ; and 17 independent mining organizations do the same for their 60,000 members.

The OTBA already mentioned is the social welfare organization of the state employees and has almost 100,000 members.

The social welfare fund of the City of Budapest serves the interests of the 22,000 city employees.

In addition to these there are 89 insurance boards operated by large commercial concerns for the benefit of their employees with assets amounting to almost 300 million pengős.

The newspaper men, lawyers, actors, notaries public and postmasters and their employees each have separate retirement pension societies. 745

The second most important Hungarian social welfare project organized during the last 20 years was that of the insurance of the agricultural labourers. This will be reviewed in the chapter dealing with agricultural social welfare policy.[1]

Social Programme of Taxation.

Hungarian public finances are governed by social considerations and are progressive in character. Parliament has enacted several laws since 1918 in order to divide the burden of taxation progressively. The taxation policy is readily adaptable to the prevailing economic trends, and in spite of the present burden of heavy re-armament expenses and past economic depressions, the taxation is far more just and easily borne from the social point of view than heretofore. The success of the Hungarian public finance policy is proved by the fact that the state does not now requisition a relatively higher proportion of the national income than it did during the years just preceeding the war. 657

The explicitly social implications of the Hungarian public finance policy are described in the following paragraphs.

The income tax rates were computed on a progressive basis even in the first Hungarian income tax enactment (Act X of 1909.). Since then the progressive rate of increase was made more pronounced by Act XXII of 1940 in so far as it raised the tax burdens on the yearly incomes of 7000 pengõs or more and left the rate in the lower income brackets unchanged.

[1] [cf. category 116, pp. 39-51 - - Analyst]

Protection of the agricultural labourers.

745 241 In spite of all the difficulties inherent in the years of depression following the first world war, the Government introduced social welfare measures which will have their beneficial effects on the welfare of the agrarian population for a long time to come.

465 468 These measures were taken by the Government as far back as 1923. Act XXV of 1923 laid the foundation for the regulation of minimum wages for farm labourers, another law (Act XXIV of 1923) regulates the legal procedure in wage disputes, a third law (Act XI of 1923) [476] secured subsidies for the co-operative societies of farm labourers. The interest of the farm labourers under contract was promoted by Act V of 1933 in a marked degree by regulating the forms of contracts.

Minimum wages.

465 241 Since the minimum wage act of 1923 only regulated the wages of day-labourers, in 1940 a new law was enacted which extended the benefit of minimum wage legislation to all kinds of farm labour. In conformity with the provisions of this law the minimum wage standards are fixed in each county separately according to subsistence standards, value of labour and working conditions prevailing in the county. Care was taken that laws enacted for the protection of labour should be enforced. To this end the agricultural labour inspection bureau was established, which is entrusted with the task of enforcing the provisions of the law.

Employment bureaux.

464 241 At the time of the establishment of the labour inspection bureaux the state modernized the agricultural

labour exchange offices. In the forty years of their existence these exchanges did valuable work and their efficacy was greatly increased by their reorganization and by appointing labour inspectors to their staff. Under the new system 100,000 labourers were provided with jobs in 1940 and more than 164,000 in 1941. The activities of the labour exchanges have somewhat diminished lately on account of the war-time shortage in labour, but the demand for their services will increase in the future. The present organization is able to equalize the shortages in agricultural labour existing in some places and the over-supply in some others while impartially observing the true needs of the labour forces.

Social insurance.

The establishment of the social insurance system for the agrarian population and the adequate protection of their interests depended on the producing capacity of the country and was affected by the limited possibilities of the years of depression. The various branches of social insurance covering agricultural workers were established as soon as the depression was eased. In 1936 the retirement pension system for farm overseers (Act XXXVI), in 1938 the old age pension system for farm labourers (Act XII), and in 1939 widowhood benefits (Act XVI) were established by law and in the meantime important new bylaws regulated and increased the services of the forty-year-old accident insurance system.

OMBI.

Two institutions are responsible to-day for the social insurance of the farm labourers. One of them is the OTI,

745 241 which is responsible for the sickness insurance of the agricultural labourers from the reoccupied northern territories, and the other is the National Agricultural Insurance Board (Országos Mezőgazdasági Biztosító Intézet), which insures the agricultural clerical employees against old age, disablement and accident. The compulsory insurance of the farm labourers against accidents and old age is also under the OMBI. The most important innovation in the early 'thirties was the extension of the old age insurance system to cover agricultural labourers and their widows. When the old age pension system was founded, the right to participate in its benefits was not made subject to the payment of contributions for a certain period, consequently by 1940 nearly seventy thousand farm labourers had received such benefits without having paid anything in contributions.

[466] The compulsory accident insurance of the farm labourers has been in force since 1900, but applied to only a relatively small group of the labourers. Since the system was reorganized the number of insured rose rapidly to nearly half a million.

Agrarian Family Welfare.

746 As a result of economic and financial difficulties referred to above, the plans of the Government for agrarian social welfare could not be implemented until the late 'thirties. However, in 1940 an institution was formed which deserves special attention both for its scope and its novel features.

ONCsA.

The new institution, the National Folk and Family Protection Bureau (Országos Nép- és Családvédelmi Alap), was established by Act XXII of 1940. Its object was to

Article 44.

642 693 Public prosecutors proceed independently of the central and local administrative and executive organs of the state.

SECTION EIGHT

The Rights and Duties of Citizens.

Article 45.

642 641 1) The Hungarian People's Republic guarantees for its citizens the right to work and the right to remuneration in accordance with the quantity and quality of the work done.

2) This right is implemented by the Hungarian People's Republic by means of the planned development of the forces of production and by a manpower policy based on economic planning.

Article 46.

642 466 1) The Hungarian People's Republic ensures the right of rest and recreation for its citizens.

2) This right is implemented by the Hungarian People's Republic by means of a legally determined working day, holidays with pay and the organization of the rest and recreation of the workers.

Article 47.

642 745 1) The Hungarian People's Republic protects the health of the workers and assists them in the event of sickness or disability.

2) The Hungarian People's Republic implements this protection and assistance by means of a comprehensive social insurance scheme and the organization of medical services.

Article 48.

642 871 1) The Hungarian People's Republic ensures the right to education for every worker.

2) The Hungarian People's Republic implements this right by means of an extension to all of educational facilities, by means of a free and compulsory general schooling scheme, by the provision of secondary and higher schools, by educational facilities for adult workers and by financial aid to those receiving schooling of any kind.